2.06 Notes

Lawrence Kohlberg – studied moral development by presenting moral dilemmas to males of all ages, looking for trends in how different age groups answered (case studies)

**Pre conventional Stage:** (<9 years) Children haven’t developed their own moral rules yet.

**REWARDS AND PUNISHMENT**

Level 1: Fear of punishment (powerful authority with fixed set of rules)

Stealing is bad. (Why?) Because he will get punished.

Heinz can steal it because he asked first and it's not like he stole something big; he won't get punished

Level 2: Self-interest and exchange (different authorities have different expectations, so serve yourself)

Heinz might steal the drug if he wanted his wife to live, but that he doesn't have to if he wants to marry someone younger and better-looking

Heinz was right to steal the drug because the druggist was unwilling to make a fair deal; he was "trying to rip Heinz off.

Heinz should steal for his wife "because she might return the favor some day"

**Conventional Stage:** (>9 years) Individuals recognize they are members of society with values and norms

**NORMS AN D SOCIAL ORDER**

Level 3: Conformity to gain approval

It was really the druggist's fault, he was unfair, trying to overcharge and letting someone die. Heinz loved his wife and wanted to save her. I think anyone would. I don't think they would put him in jail. The judge would look at all sides, and see that the druggist was charging too much.

Level 4: Maintaining social order, fulfilling obligations, upholding laws

I don't want to sound like Spiro Agnew, law and order and wave the flag, but if everybody did as he wanted to do, set up his own beliefs as to right and wrong, then I think you would have chaos. The only thing I think we have in civilization nowadays is some sort of legal structure which people are sort of bound to follow. [Society needs] a centralizing framework.

**Post-conventional Stage:** (> adolescence; formal operations is required) Individuals are concerned with principles that make for a good society even if they oppose social convention.

**RIGHTS AND PRINCIPLES**

Level 5: Emphasis is on basic human rights and democratic process

It is the husband's duty to save his wife. The fact that her life is in danger transcends every other standard you might use to judge his action. Life is more important than property. From a moral standpoint, Heinz should save the life of even a stranger, since to be consistent, the value of a life means any life.

Level 6: Belief in universally just principles.

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Criticisms of Kohlberg’s Theory

1. Very rare to find people with post conventional reasoning (no one in original study answered this way; he hypothesized its existence in some famous people (like Gandhi or Immanuel Kant)
2. research based on all male subjects (Carol Gilligan). Women more likely to have ethic of care and responsibility, while men more likely to have ethic of individual rights and justice. This theory favors the male ethic and implies that the female ethic is inferior.
   1. Gilligan repeated study with women and came up with her own scale:

Ethics of care:

Preconventional – moral behavior is self-serving

Conventional – moral behavior is self-sacrificing

Post-conventional – more behavior attempts to avoid harm to self and others.

1. Some non-Western cultures have a much greater emphasis on interdependence and concern for welfare of the group. Again, Kohlberg’s theory implies that this ethic is inferior.